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OP Action

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OP ACTION ITEM FROM IG'S REPORT ON TRAINING

Recommendation No. 1 (Page 24 of Report)

Action assigned to: Personnel Operations Division OP Work Project No. 13-61

Recommendation: The Directors of Personnel and Training together with representatives from operating components take a fresh look at the overall problem of clerical usage and make recommendations for a more effective system. This should be followed by an OTR reassessment of the clerical training program.

D/Pers Comment: Agree. We believe that primary responsibility for this study should be assigned to the Director of Personnel and that the study should be broadened to include all aspects of clerical recruitment, selection, training, and utilization.

We consider that such a study would include an examination and evaluation of recruitment sources and techniques, an analysis of experienced attrition, a review of the levels of intellect, education, and clerical skills actually required in the performance of Agency clerical positions, a review of testing standards and other screening techniques, and a systematic survey of the use being made of clerical personnel. We would expect such a study to provide a factual basis for necessary adjustments in any of these aspects of the clerical employment program. (Balance of D/Pers comment corrected misunderstanding on attrition rates.)

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DD/S Comment: Concur. While within the DD/S area there is mixed reaction as to the degree of need for such a re-examination, it is agreed that it will be beneficial.

DDCI Action: Approve.

Proposed OTR Action: Suggested that DTR and D/Pers meet with senior training officers of Deputy Directorates to establish terms of reference and instructions to a working group; Deputy Directorates select each one representative for a working group to accomplish appropriate survey and prepare recommendations to DTR and D/Pers. DTR pass recommendations to C/AES and C/IS as basis for their reassessment of clerical training.

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military and there is an unending array of cross-disciplinary problems on which the intelligence researcher must be challenged to think constructively.

10. Clerical training raises a host of questions for which there are no simple answers. The basic factor determining present CIA clerical training policy is the difficult market for clerical staff. The Agency has a large requirement for clerical support overseas and out of its own and State Department experience has reached the conclusion that clerical employees under 21 years of age are apt to be too immature to adjust satisfactorily to the living conditions and work pressures of overseas assignments. This limitation and its high standards in recruitment generally throw the Agency into the competition for the highest quality personnel on the market. There are, of course, many other complications, including salary competition and high living costs plus difficult living conditions in the headquarters area. The most important additional factor is the Agency's large-scale employment of young women who are marriageable or, if married, contribute a major element of the attrition rate by reason of childbearing. CIA recruited in excess of 800 clerical personnel during 1959 and could expect according to current experience to have the average clerical employee resign after only 18 months of service.

11. The initial location and screening of clerical candidates for employment is performed by CIA field recruiters. These men look in particular to the heads of responsible commercial training schools for leads on desirable candidates. Applicants are required to take United States Employment Service proficiency tests wherever possible, where this is not feasible the testing may be waived until EOD on presentation of

certification of proficiency by a high school or commercial training institution. Such certification unfortunately has frequently proved to be unreliable. The recruiters themselves present and score a test worked out by OTR's Assessment and Evaluation Staff covering basic aptitudes and personality factors. About 80 per cent of all candidates are rejected in the present period for poor test scores and other deficiencies. The long wait for security clearance is a factor at this point in holding desirable candidates and the Office of Personnel has found it necessary from 1948 forward to bring about half of its clerical recruits on duty in an interim assignment pool in advance of clearance.

12. Up to this point the Agency has exercised options on the rigorousness of its testing and the decision to EOD in advance of full clearance. It is perhaps inevitable that the recruiters, the clerical trainers and the consumers differ on the policies involved. The trainers understandably hope to start with personnel of high proficiency, instead they frequently meet up with recruits who fail to demonstrate their certified qualifications. The recruiters, with intimate knowledge of the market and in view of the high CIA attrition rate, question the need and results of the A&E testing and the, to them, unrealistic rate of rejection of candidates. Both parties attest to the frequent waste of quality personnel in inadequate assignments. An off-the-cuff estimate is that eight out of ten secretaries with shorthand make little or no use of their skill because their executives do not dictate their correspondence.

13. The clerical faculty offers instruction in typing, shorthand, English usage, and geography. A three-day Agency orientation is provided for clericals cleared for office duty. A packet of these courses is provided at induction for individuals awaiting clearance. The average length of training at this point is three weeks, the range is from one to five weeks. A second packet of courses is provided as refresher instruction for individuals seeking to qualify for more responsible assignments, or

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20 - 30 hours part-time.

This training runs

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14. In summary, clerical training must be weighed in the broader context of clerical recruitment, job assignment, utilization and attrition. Must the Agency hire employees who require extensive training in typing and shorthand immediately following entrance on duty? Does the A&E testing applied to clerical candidates justify itself in the light of present-day attrition rates? Are the recruiters reaching segments of the market less subject to attrition due to marriage and childbearing? What portion of clerical loss is due to waste of talent in low quality assignments? The evidence on these matters must be regularly reassessed.

It is recommended that:

The Directors of Personnel and Training together with representatives from operating components take a fresh look at the over-all problem of clerical usage and make recommendations for a more effective system. This should be followed by an OTR reassessment of the clerical training program.